

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

April 8, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

PRESENT: Atwater, Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Leon, Pattacini,
Scappaticci, Walton

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kisiel, Assistant
Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess

ABSENT: Luxenberg, Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance &
Management Brooks

A. OPENING

A.1&2. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Chairperson Pattacini.

A.3 ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of March 25, 2013.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

B.1. Student Representative

Anna Manser, Student Representative from MHS, updated the Board on the happenings at the high school:

- Sno-Ball was held January 26 at Rentschler Field with approximately 340 students and guests attending.
- Love & Basketball – an event sponsored by the freshman class allowed students to attend a boys' basketball game followed by a Valentine's dance sold over 100 tickets.
- Winter Spirit Week took place Feb. 19-22, with themed days and cupcake wars as part of the fun.

- The junior class had a benefit concert called "I am Hip Hop" with Joncarlo Cortese performing. Over 140 tickets were sold and proceeds were split between the class and Pasture Farm & Rescue.
- The junior class sponsored a murder mystery dinner theater, which sold over 200 tickets and was very entertaining.
- In March, Fellowship of Christian Athletes hosted a dodge ball tournament with 10-12 teams competing and the money raised was donated to MACC Charities.
- The National Honor Society hosted the annual MARC dance in March.
- History Day was held in the cafeteria on March 16th, with MHS having the most students advance on to the state competition.
- The musical *Anything Goes* was performed March 14-16.
- The Mr. MHS pageant was held for junior and senior boys to compete for prom tickets, prom gear, and the title of Mr. MHS, with over 450 tickets being sold. The winner and Mr. MHS was senior Michael Dibble, 1st runner up was senior Ryan Dube, 2nd runner up was Emmanuel Caicedo.
- Future Business Leaders and DECA hosted an eggstravaganza for elementary school kids.
- Spring sports are starting their season.

Mr. Scappaticci added that he had attended the musical *Anything Goes* and thoroughly enjoyed it. He noted there are wonderful things happening at MHS.

B.2. Relay for Life Youth Community Spirit Awards

Dr. Kisiel noted that Manchester has a long, proud history of participation in Relay for Life. He stated that this is an opportunity to come together to celebrate life and the promises of life and he plans to be there with "Team Kennedy" to raise money for this cause.

Ms. Grace DeAngelis, numeracy coach at Highland Park School, and Ms. Cheryl White, a 6th grade teacher at Bennet, are heading up the Relay in Manchester this year. Typically the Manchester event sees 800-1000 participants with 35-45 teams. Approximately 80-150 survivors are present. This is a great event that helps children with character development and this year three special teams are being honored for their participation last year.

Last year over \$90,000 was raised and the goal this year is \$100,000. In 3rd place last year, Chestnut Hill Preschool raised over \$2,000. Their team has participated in Relay for ten years. In 2nd place was Martin School. The first place team was the Bennet Bears and Highland Park, who teamed up together when Highland's 5th graders were housed at Bennet during construction and will stay together as a team again this year. The first and second place teams each raised over \$5,000.

One of the students who previously was on the Bennet team noted that this year Illing will host a National Honor Society team in memory of teacher Mr. Lewis who recently passed away.

**The Relay for Life will be held at Northwest Park June 1-2, 2013.
This is a 24 hour event, running from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.**

Mr. Pattacini thanked the teams for their efforts in supporting a great cause and inspiring our students to participate. He thanked the students for becoming active in community involvement.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Dr. Kisiel presented three items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

C.1. Personnel Action

Details had already been provided to the Board members in their agenda folders.

C.2. Establish an appropriation for FY 2013-14 for the Manchester Head Start in the amount of \$923,279

C.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 2013-14 for the Manchester Head Start Training and Technical Assistance activities in the amount of \$12,250

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 2013-14 for the Enfield Head Start in the amount of \$642,130

C.5. Establish an appropriation for FY 2013-14 for the Enfield Head Start Training and Technical Assistance activities in the amount of \$8,909

C.6. Establish an increase in appropriation for FY2012-13 in the amount of \$504 for the College Access Challenge Grant, bringing the total award amount to \$81,656

C.7. Manchester Head Start Head Recruitment Plan 2013-2014

C.8. Manchester Head Start Program – Process for Impasse

C.9. Transfer of Funds

Details had already been provided to the Board members in their agenda folders.

- Transfer from System Music Contracted Services to System Music Instructional Supplies/Materials account in the amount of \$1,792

C.10. Increase the FY2012-13 appropriation for the Out-Of-Town Magnet School Transportation Grant in the amount of \$16,000, bringing the total appropriation to \$154,000

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to adopt item C in the agenda, the Consent Calendar.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Elaine Kahaner, 239 Ludlow Road, is a retired psychotherapist from Manchester Hospital. She is speaking tonight about funding for TLC, the Transitional Living Center, of which she has been a member of the Board of Directors since its inception nearly 30 years ago. This has been a success since its start and has provided a safe home that allows hundreds of teenagers safe passage into society, who through no fault of their own cannot live at home. The home provides warm and supportive surrounds, access to counseling, a structured environment, and the support of house parents. Many occupants continue on to college after their time at TLC. Because of TLC the town can avoid the cost of outplacements and tuition and treatment for the students that live there and are able to remain a part of their own community. Ms. Kahaner feels it is false economy to deny funding to TLC. It costs more to outplace just one child, away from their family and community. This program has been studied and serves as a model for other towns and even other states. We are unique in having this resource and having a community that has the foresight to support children before the kinds of crises that leads to tragedies, both individual and communal. Every dollar put into prevention equals many hundreds of thousands of dollars in remediation and treatment. The savings to society, in monetary terms, is immeasurable. This program has proven itself to save money, but more importantly it saves children.

Ronnie Kim, 62 Wyneding Hill Road, is a retired school social worker. She supports TLC funding. As a social worker she dealt with students that had to be placed in a group home that was not in their own community. TLC is a safety net for kids, socially, academically, and emotionally. It has also been a safety net for the town of Manchester and the Board of Education, as it allows the students to be maintained in our community. Having to place students further away presents a strange experience for them. TLC provides students with a family-like atmosphere that is supportive. For the Board of Education it means

the student stays in our schools, with our teachers, and is economical. It is less expensive for the Board of Education to contribute to TLC than to pay outplacement tuition. She also feels being at TLC improves the academics of the student, closing the achievement gap, in a supportive family atmosphere.

Ryan Parker, 462 East Middle Turnpike, has been a teacher in town for 9 years and is speaking on behalf of TLC tonight. He realizes the positive impact having a stable, supportive home has on children. They receive the proper nutrition, all necessary health care, they receive the love and support that they need, which leads to academic success, increased graduation rates, and higher education options. He has also witnessed the alternative, the lack of stability, and how that leads to lack of focus, frustration, and sadness. He has seen this expressed in anger, fear and confusion, which leads to lower academics, dropouts, crime, incarceration, substance abuse, and the perpetuation of unstable households. It is rare that we can play a role in the achievement gap outside the classroom, but TLC provides that avenue. It is costly to deny students these opportunities. We are lucky to have such a light in our community, a home open to six kids that provides nutrition, love, care, support, and the stability necessary for academic success. Mr. Parker doesn't understand how we think it is cost effective to close this house. He feels we should be increasing funding, opening another home, not closing this one. There is no greater investment than the investment we put into our children in our community.

Jevon Lawrence, a student, is currently a TLC housemate. Either your circumstances or your choices determine how successful you are in life. Until age six he lived with his mother in an unsafe and dirty household. He was then placed in a foster home and eventually with an aunt. When he was placed with family he thought he would have a loving home, but he soon realized his aunt was not going to meet his expectations. She was aggressive and unhappy and the household had a negative vibe. This made him anxious and he didn't want to go home. The aunt called him names, told him she was doing him a favor by taking him in, and was verbally and mentally abusive, which effected his performance in school. He became angry and upset and was not learning as much as he could until junior year. After the violence escalated he was moved to TLC and it changed his life for the better. He had structure which his aunt's home lacked. He was given time to do homework, do chores, taught independent living skills, and have fun. This helped him function with less stress and less drama. He could focus on himself and is doing well. He is happy with himself now and less depressed. His grades have improved and he was recently student of the month. He has learned a strong work ethic and while it was a risk to leave his aunt, TLC changed his life. It opened his eyes to future possibilities. He now sees himself as a future college graduate and he now believes he has the strength and character, determination, academic skills, and motivation that it will take to achieve his goals.

Carrie Beimler, a student, lived at TLC for eight months. TLC changed her. Prior to TLC, she was skipping school, disobeying her parents, and being a "bad kid". She is back home now and has her act together. She is on the honor roll at MHS. She will be graduating on time and will attend college in September. Previously she did not believe she would graduate on time, if at all. TLC helped her with her living situation at home and helped her become closer with her parents. Please don't close TLC.

Nancy Beimler, 158 Lamplighter Drive, is the mother of the previous speaker. Her daughter was out of control and her issues were beyond our scope or the scope of the school system. She was spinning away from everything. TLC provided her with the ability to become part of the solution and not part of the problem. TLC got her back into life and to respect herself and others. TLC provided the short-term solution that was needed so that she could become the person she is becoming today, earning honors, holding a job, preparing to get her drivers license, and about to go to college. All of these were out of her reach a year ago, until they were blessed with the TLC house. Ms. Beimler is grateful to TLC for their invaluable help and for the work they do it should not be cut.

Devon Smith, a student, is a TLC resident. Previously, he was rude, disrespectful to his mother, stayed out late. He hated the world because of his father's death. He had spun out of control and his mother couldn't handle him. Beth Mix offered him a choice to go to TLC. At first he didn't want to as he thought he wouldn't get to see his family, but then he realized he could have visits on the weekends. TLC has taught him to respect his mom, helped him with school, and improved his behavior. Previously he was at MRA full time and now he has been able to transition to a half time schedule at MRA and half time at MHS. TLC has helped him and he doesn't know what he would do if TLC was closed.

Ashley Porter, 17 North Street, is a TLC house parent. She spoke to the town last week and Mayor Diana expressed his concern about the lose of joint funding for TLC. Ms. Porter feels that the mayor's concern should mean something to the Board of Education. We just heard from some current and past students who have lived in the house to see the impact TLC has had on them. She knows some board members have visited TLC previously and see a home filled with family, love, and opportunity. TLC effects the Board of Education in that kids that can focus result in academic achievement. The staff meets with teachers and counselors to try to bridge the gap between the mental health disparities and lack of academic achievement and motivation. The students there are tutored weekly in the house and often become honor roll students. They have the opportunity to go to college. Many students have raised their grades from D's and F's to A's and B's in just a quarter of a school year. The residents of TLC get involved in their community. They help pack backpacks for less fortunate children and volunteer in the pre-K summer school. They also participate in

enrichment activities such as attending plays, visiting Mystic seaport, doing research reports and participating in other activities that enrich their educational environment. They are provided with nourishment, appropriate sleep schedules, and structure, which are essential to becoming productive citizens in a community. TLC focuses on a holistic aspect to treatment, provides a safe environment, helps with academic success so kids can be productive citizens in our community, and it also saves the town money. Out-placing only four kids would cost more than the TLC budget for the year.

Chris Parla, 31 Village Street, is a graduate of MHS and now attends UCONN. He is here to speak about the possible cutting of the athletic trainer position. As a 12-season athlete during his time at MHS he was lucky to avoid any major injuries and feels this would not have been possible without Mary Cardarelli. He had shin splints and other minor injuries and she knew what to do to help prevent further injuries. With safety of students a major concern for the Board, he doesn't see how cutting the athletic trainer position can be considered. Ms. Cardarelli has incredible knowledge and she deeply cares about her athletes, creating a personal connection with them. He always felt welcome by her and feels the athletic program would be lost without her.

Jonathan Zelaya, 189 East Center Street, is a former MHS student who suffered injuries during Varsity wrestling, necessitating an 8 month recovery. Ms. Cardarelli helped him during this time. Without her 20 years of experience and welcoming environment things would have ended differently. He is thankful to her and he is speaking tonight because she needs to stay at MHS. She is caring and brings a high level of education to her position. Mr. Zelaya feels he is mobile today because of her teaching him the proper exercises. Losing her would be losing a great person who cares and we cannot replace her.

Logan Welch, 241 Grissom Road, is a 2012 graduate of MHS. During his 3 years playing baseball Ms. Cardarelli helped him with training. The first year he was at the high school he didn't make the team and she encouraged him to train early and work hard to get in. The next year he made it. He feels Ms. Cardarelli connects with students on a one-to-one basis. She is easy to talk to and works in her own community. Her passion cannot be matched and she works overtime in her position. A replacement would not be as available and her passion cannot be matched by an outside replacement. Ms. Cardarelli's experience cannot be simulated by part-time trainers. Her skills as a trainer extend far beyond what is expected of an athletic trainer and she is a wise mentor and a compassionate friend. Sometimes the hardest injuries to rehab aren't physical ailments, but mental and emotional ones.

Andrew Isaacs, a student, is a senior at MHS who plays football. In his junior year he suffered a torn ACL and Ms. Cardarelli was the first to help him get through his injury mentally. He had dark moments and she reminded him that

through hard work he would make it. She knows how to connect with athletes on a different level and he feels she is the most valuable person in the athletic wing. She is very important, not only to him, but to our community.

DarcyAnn Rodrigues, a student, was a TLC resident at the beginning of the year. At first she was ashamed to be there, but now she looks at it as an honor. They cared so much about her. They bought her clothes, fed her, gave her a bed. She will remember them for life and she would be disappointed to see TLC shut down. It would be a mistake not only for the people currently residing there, but for those that will reside there in the future. She believes TLC can impact the future of other students. TLC brings out the light in the future. When she found out that this meeting was happening tonight she ran here so she could speak about keeping TLC. When she was there she raised her grades and made honor roll. They taught her so much about herself that she didn't even know. Now, instead of going off to community college, she realized she deserves better and has joined the Marines. She thanks TLC for that!

Damika Esposito-Overton, 467 North Main Street, has two children attending MHS and is here to speak about Mary Cardarelli. Her daughter is a senior who has played basketball and soccer, and her son is a junior who plays football. As a single mom Ms. Esposito feels like Ms. Cardarelli plays the roll of a second parent, stepping in when mom cannot be there and providing a level of comfort. As a volunteer for the booster club, Ms. Esposito sees Ms. Cardarelli almost daily during practices. She sees her provide exercises, be a trusted advisor, a family friend, and almost a step-mom to the kids when their parents are absent. Ms. Esposito trusts her and there is loyalty and love that we cannot buy in another trainer. No one can fill her sneakers and she cannot be replaced and to lose her would be a disservice to the students and parents.

Lindsay Collier, 99 Jenny Cliff, is a 2010 graduate of MHS. She attends UCONN currently. She feels Ms. Cardarelli was one of the largest influences in her high school career. Ms. Cardarelli provides love and support that we cannot get with a per diem trainer. Because of Ms. Cardarelli, who noticed that she and her brother have shallow kneecaps, she has been able to avoid surgery due to the exercises Ms. Cardarelli gave her. Ms. Collier believes Ms. Cardarelli cares and this cannot be copied by someone who is there less. Now, kids can see her before practice so practice runs smoothly. She provides a great environment for recovery. She is thankful for her support during high school.

Megan Cardarelli, 74 Horton Road, is the daughter of Mary Cardarelli. She has watched her mom help athletes on the field, in the gym, and in her office. She stated that her mom is always the first one there for an injury. She realizes how important her mom is to the students and she saw that during her own basketball season. She recalls how a teammate of hers was having bad headaches and numbness and her mom recognized this was an issue and the

student was sent to a doctor and diagnosed with a brain tumor, had surgery, and is now healthy. Her mom makes a difference in the community. She is a certified athletic trainer as well as a licensed physical therapist and has held positions such as athletic trainer for UCONN men's basketball team, Trinity College women's soccer team, and the under 18 Irish National team. Megan points out her mom's over-qualifications are a sure indication that she doesn't work at MHS for the money, but because of her passion for working with high school athletes. She is not always the favorite person when she makes a student sit out of a practice or a game, but they know it is because she cares about the health of each and every individual for that season and for a lifetime. Megan realizes the town is trying to save money, but putting the athletes at risk is not the way to do that. The safety of the kids in our town should be a main priority. She points out the official statement from the National Athletic Trainers Association that says, "The medical delivery system for injured student athletes needs a coordinator within the local school community who will facilitate the prevention, recognition, treatment, and reconditioning of sports-related injuries. Therefore, it is the position of the National Athletic Trainers Association that all secondary schools should provide the services of a full time, on-site, certified athletic trainer to student athletes." With this being said, as a former athlete at MHS, she would like the Board to reconsider the proposal of cutting this position.

Arianna Rivera, 14 Victoria Road, played soccer, basketball, and participated in track during her four years at MHS. Her junior and senior years were the worst of her life, with her not getting along with her parents and not receiving support from home. Ms. Cardarelli helped her and was there for her. In her senior year she was kicked out of her home and Ms. Cardarelli was there to listen to her and support her. Through the career center, Ms. Rivera shadowed Ms. Cardarelli and now wants to be like her. She cares about her athletes and MHS would never be the same without her. Ms. Cardarelli even helped getting Ms. Rivera into college, helping her with her essays. Ms. Cardarelli is important to her and she wants her to keep her job. She is valuable to the community and is a mentor and a friend.

Ray Colon, a student, is a senior at MHS and doesn't know Ms. Cardarelli. He doesn't play sports. But being here, hearing his peers speak on her behalf, he feels that this person is valuable to the community. That feeling of trust takes time to build and he points out that the four years of high school are probably the most important in a student's life, when they need a lot of support. Ms. Cardarelli obviously gives support and helps students through their time at MHS. Even if you don't know her, your friends tell you that she can be trusted and that is valuable.

Dino Peruccio, 15 Bramblebush Road, had three daughters that previously played sports at MHS. He is concerned with reducing the athletic trainer position because Mary was there to say if the kids were ready to play and the parents could trust her decisions. She cares about kids. The coaches come and go, but

injuries can be there for life. She is an expert and professional that cares about the kids. This is not about the game, but about the kids. Manchester hosts a lot of athletic meets and Mary provides outstanding, professional care that is there immediately if there is an injury. She even misses her own children's games to attend events. She also mentors athletic trainer students. Sports is a big part of high school. Mr. Perruccio points out Mary grew up here, played here, and had opportunities to leave, but she stays here because she is hometown grown and she loves it here. She has a passion. This is not just a job but a calling for her. She comes in early and stays late. Trivializing this position is wrong. We will not get someone that spent 20 years in the system, understanding these kids through the years. We have heard many students speak about her positive influence that goes beyond sports training, it is about life. He has known Mary for eight years and she cares about the kids. We have to look at that, money is a big thing, but to take someone who cares and loves this place and remove them, the Board needs to rethink that. It would be the wrong thing for Manchester and the wrong thing for our student athletes.

Jevon Lawrence, a student, notes that in his junior year he suffered two concussions. He had passed out and no family was available to be with him. Ms. Cardarelli went with him to the hospital and stayed with him all night until his aunt could come hours later. Cutting her would be really bad as she reaches out to many different people in different situations.

Maria McEvoy, 115 Charter Oak Street, states the bottom line is we need to keep the full time position of athletic trainer at MHS. We shouldn't be playing contact sports if we cannot keep this position. Ms. McEvoy has three sons that are going through the school system. Ms. Cardarelli kept her son off the field when he was injured and even gave her cell phone number to Ms. McEvoy. She feels that teenagers will let things slip by and keep playing, and with a part-time trainer those small injuries may slip through the cracks. She provides preventative care and physical therapy exercises, and keeps parents in the loop. We have a trusted adult the kids can go to and the parents can trust. Ms. Cardarelli touched her family with her warm personality. She even checks on Ms. McEvoy's elderly mother when she comes to watch a game with her wheelchair and oxygen. We cannot forget behind this position is a person, a valuable person.

Courtney DeTarando, 92 Oak Forest Drive, is a physical education teacher at Martin and went through the Manchester school system herself, having attended at Buckley, Illing, and MHS. She is also a music geek, which is also another item on the docket to cut. She realizes the Board has a tough job and these are not easy decisions, but Mary should be easy to decision to save. She is invaluable. With the town in a spotlight for liability, it astounds her that this position would be considered to be cut when she can save the town from future liability by being proactive and not reactive. She is a big reason that AED's are in our schools. She is a big reason that athletes continue on to do great things and

that students go on to do great things. Ms. Cardarelli is one in a million and that is priceless!

Michelle Richards, 110 Columbus Street, has known Mary for 18 years and she is an amazing person. Ms. Richards currently has a son at the high school who swims and plays baseball. She has two more boys who will attend in the future. After a prior injury she told her son to see Ms. Cardarelli, and he didn't, but Mary sought him out and was proactive in helping him. She loves these kids. She gives blood, sweat, and tears to the community. She writes grants to obtain equipment. The kids will lose out and it will hurt the kids to lose her. Not all students are academic, some shine on the field. We trust and love Mary. Not all students have a strong home, and she provides a strong mentor for students and it would be horrendous to take that away.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, welcomes the passionate support for Ms. Cardarelli and he hopes her position can be restored in the budget. He graduated from MHS in 1974 and he is glad to hear there is a caring adult there that the children can confide in. He also feels restoring TLC funding is necessary. He was impressed by the speakers at the Board of Directors meeting last week regarding TLC. Mr. Stringfellow recommends the book *Multiplications for White People*. He feels it is vital for children of color to rise up to expectations. He also feels the term subgroups needs to be scraped and hopefully by 2014 you will change that name. He hopes there is no cheating going on in town and notes scandals in other states. Mr. Stringfellow recommends the new movie coming out about Jackie Robinson. Last, he notes President Obama spoke about gun control and school safety at the University of Hartford today.

Brian Richards, 110 Columbus Street, wasn't planning on speaking, but got the feeling like some minds were made up about Ms. Cardarelli prior to people speaking. This is not a line item, it is a position and a person. In the corporate world he deals with there is a return on investment, which is through the roof with Mary. He compares having her to having Tiger Woods as a golf pro at the local country club. Mr. Richards is a republican and he promotes smart spending, not just less spending.

Taylor Wisinski, a student, is a senior at MHS and Ms. Cardarelli has been there for her through all her sports. She suffered an injury to her thumb in volleyball that she just shook off this year. She went to Ms. Cardarelli, who said she had a torn ligament. She went to the doctor and was misdiagnosed with a fracture, eventually being correctly diagnosed with a torn ligament as Ms. Cardarelli had originally said. Had she waited to seek treatment, she could have lost movement in her thumb. She points out Ms. Cardarelli is one of the smartest people she knows, she knows what she is doing and she is good at her job. She is the heart of the school and we shouldn't get rid of her as she deserves her job.

Brendan Thibideau, a student, is a senior at MHS and is here tonight for a project for class. He expected to be bored but has been emotionally moved, both regarding TLC and Ms. Cardarelli. Regarding Ms. Cardarelli, he doesn't know her but states she is someone we cannot lose. She has helped people and made them feel they are not alone. He has suffered depression through his teen years and could have used someone like her to help him through his problems and make him feel like he had a place, which is what he is hearing she has done for these other people. This is a fantastic woman who cares deeply. This is not about the money but about the kids and her passion for the job, the students, the school, and the community and he doesn't think she should lose her job.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the participants for their comments, especially the students, and noted that it is a life skill to be able to advocate passionately for one's views.

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART II

E.1. Update Report on the District Improvement Plan

Dr. Kisiel presented a Power Point, which is available on the website. He reminded the Board that this improvement plan was decided on by the Board and the goals span five years. This report will be presented to the State Department of Education in a quarterly meeting this week. Dr. Kisiel reviewed the strategies being used to close the achievement gap, including:

- The jump start program for students with no pre-K experience. Currently there are 30 applicants, though 90-120 were anticipated. He is disappointed in the response and hopes to increase the participation for students entering Kindergarten in the Fall who have not had a pre-K experience.
- Additional tutors have been added for Tier 2 and Tier 3 support intervention in literacy and numeracy as well as ELL. Nine additional tutors were hired.
- On-line assessment are being used to monitor student progress and focus on Tier 1 and 2 intervention. This was a pilot in January and will occur again in May and will provide a baseline evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction.
- SAAM Summer Advantage Academy of Manchester is a six week program running July 1 through August 9. Over 1000 students applied and due to space and funding constraints the decision has been made to eliminate the Kindergarten participants. The program will be for those students currently in grades 1-5. Dr. Kisiel noted he thinks some parents have signed up for both the SAAM program and the Parks & Rec program, and they will have to decide which to participate in. Dr. Kisiel also noted that those families who are planning a 1-2 week

vacation during this period should reconsider their application and consider signing up with the Parks & Rec program instead, as a one or two week absence will impact the results of the program.

- An after-school literacy and numeracy enrichment program for students not achieving at grade level is being held at Bowers. This is a 45 day program with 75 families enrolled.

Regarding talent development:

- The teacher and administrator evaluation systems are being revised.
- New curriculum coaches with training in grades K-5.
- Alignment of school improvement plans and individual teacher professional growth plans with district goals in mind.

Expand Collaboration of School/Community Programs:

- Reduce arrests and behaviors, i.e., MAPS program.
- TRACK – truancy.

Ms. Walton was disappointed that Kindergarteners will not be able to participate in SAAM. This was a tough decision. She wonders, in the future, if there is any way to prioritize schools as she knows early intervention pays off. Dr. Kisiel stated the issue is there are only x amount of resources and the decision had to be made. Previously, the chair had also suggested limiting the program to certain students, but we need to improve the achievement of all students, and doing anything else is not in alignment with what the state wanted. He hopes parents understand this was not an easy decision.

Ms. Walton states this was a good problem to have, having too many applicants, and wonders again if next year we can plan ahead and possibly prioritize some of the schools as some of our students need support, especially over the summer, more than others.

Mr. Pattacini questioned the hiring of a substance abuse specialist with the closing of New Hope Manor. Dr. Kisiel stated that previously we were providing New Hope Manor with the funding for this position, and since they closed we simply hired that person directly.

Mr. Pattacini remarked that while we do not have the ability to require attendance in the summer program, he wonders if students do not participate fully due to vacation, if we could then give priority to those that did participate fully the next year. Dr. Kisiel noted that we are asking parents to sign a contract regarding participation in SAAM. If we do not get a signed contract back, their student will not be enrolled. If enrollment drops, we may possibly add back Kindergarten on a lottery basis.

Mr. Pattacini thinks SAAM is a great program and commends the great work done by the administration and staff. He is excited to see the successes next year.

Dr. Kisiel received information from the Superintendent's Association and states the Alliance Grant funding for next year looks like \$1.3 million, but there may be an extra \$200,000 available and he will clarify this as soon as possible.

E.2. High School Graduation Date

Dr. Kisiel noted that last week, with school being in session the Thursday and Friday of the originally scheduled Spring Break, teacher attendance was routine, while student absence rates were on the high side.

Graduation has now been set for June 20th, which is the 180th day of school. Graduation cannot be held any earlier than the 180th school day. June 25th is the last day of school, which is the 183rd day of school. After tonight, with approval from the Board, the graduation date will not change even if there is a school cancellation day.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to establish Thursday, June 20th, as the high school graduation date based on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

G. NEW BUSINESS

None.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Leon complimented the public for coming out to speak tonight and over the last few meetings of both boards. We asked for them to voice their opinions on the proposed budget cuts, and they have. Before he was a member of the Board he would be upset when the Board members didn't respond to speakers. He notes their minds are not made up yet on any of the items presented for potential cuts. They have not even spoken about any of the items. Tomorrow the Board of Directors will vote on the budget and present us with the number. As a Board, they have not discussed any of the items and will do so in a public meeting next month during budget workshops.

Dr. Kisiel reminded the Board that the SMARTR Committee meeting on Wednesday will have the architects presenting the feasibility reports on Cheney, Washington, and Robertson. The meeting will be held at 6:30 in Room 293 at MHS. No action will be required that evening, but it would be helpful information for the Board members that are not members of the committee to hear and he urges them to attend.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

J. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to items on tonight's agenda)

Rachel Brewer, a student, is a senior at MHS. She is here to speak about the music budget cuts being proposed. She has played tuba and sax and was a drum major. She is a dedicated band member and wants to see the program kept as is. She notes they have wonderful band directors and they help students that want to pursue music as a career. It is a wonderful music program and she has grown under their guidance. She has become a better person and found friends in the program. She is not the only one that has benefitted. She has learned skills, worked with others, learned to depend on others, and received support.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the items on the Consent Calendar, especially Head Start which is a necessary program. Regarding Relay for Life, he is glad to see the cooperation between Highland Park and Bennet and it is a good cause. He hopes there will be decent media coverage on that. He wishes Dr. Kisiel good luck as he presents to the State Board of Education. Regarding the drop out rate and TRACK program and truancy, he hopes to see a presentation from Mr. Mack or the Union. He feels the Board should think outside the box for presentations and listen to recommendation from the public for future presentations. It is important to talk to the people in the trenches. He points out an article in the *Reminder* March 31st regarding domestic violence and its impact on student learning. He points out an article in the *Boston Globe* on summer jobs for teenagers. He notes some local businesses, including both Starbucks and Big Y, who have programs that help children. He states we are the sum of all parts, whether we have children or not.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Leon
Board Secretary